श्री सभापति : मैं कोई वायदा नहीं करता । प्रश्न संख्या 181 ।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : यह एक महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दा है ।

श्री सभापति: यह समय प्रश्नकाल का है । प्रश्नकाल को हटाने के नियम होते हैं ।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : हमने 20 दिन पहले यह क्वेश्चन किये हैं, लेकिन आज यह जो घटना घटी है, इस पर विचार कब करेंगे ?

श्री सभापति : हाउस का कानून है कि अगर हाउस तय करता है कि प्रश्नकाल को हटा दिया जाए तो...

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : यह भी महत्वपूर्ण है ।

श्री सभापति : नियम के मुताबिक प्रश्नकाल तभी हट सकता है जब हाउस यह तय करे कि प्रश्नकाल हटा दिया जाए । मुझे उसमें कोई आपत्ति नहीं है। यह मैंने पहले भी कहा है और यह लिखा हुआ भी है ।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : मैं रिक्वेस्ट कर रहा हूं । यह इम्पोर्टेन्ट मसला है । इस पर विचार करने की जरूरत है ।

श्री सभापति : अभी क्वेश्चन चलने दिया जाए । क्वेश्चन नं. 181 **(व्यवधान)**

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS..

Enquiry into the Affairs of Government Medical Stores Depot, Bombay

*181. SHRI ASHOK NATH VERMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the various scandals in the Government Medical Stores Depot, Bombay;

(b) if so, whether Government have investigated into these scandals;

(c) if so, what are the details and findings thereof; and

(d) what action has been taken against the erring officials of the said Depot?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (d) Complaints received by Governmen: from time to time about malpractices in the Government Medical Stores Depot, Bombay, have been investigated.

Certain anonymous complaints were received against the then Deputy Assistant Director General (Medical Stores), Government Medical Stores Depot, Bombay in 1981 and subsequently they were featured in some newsitems published in local daily.

The allegations were—

(i) Acceptance of sub-standard 55 lakhs tablets of Paracetamol manufactured by M/s. Fibrosa Pharmaceuticals.

(ii) Acceptance of sub-standard sterilisers manufactured by M/s International Industries.

(iii) Help taken from other officials of Government Medical Stores Depot, Bombay by the then Deputy Assistant Director General (Medical Stores) in various malpractices.

These were got investigated during 1982-83 and it was found that items (i) and (ii) above did not indicate any lacuna or laxity on the part of the Medical Stores Depot. The allegations in respect of (iii) above were found to be vague.

SHRI ASHOK NATH VERMA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the answer to my question is vague and investigations have not been carried out at all. A large number of

hospitals in Maharashtra as well as in other parts of the country have been returning medicines worth crores of rupees. Medicines worth 1500 crores of rupees have been returned as the medicines supplied are of sub-standard quality, or whose expiry dates are over or they have not been indented at all. As per the report of the Audit, due to such sub-standard medicines, the health of the country is worsening day by day. Medicines worth crores of rupees have been purchased within a day or two without inviting any tender. As a result of purchase of fake medicines by the Director of Medical Stores which have been administered, several deaths have taken place in the J.J. Group of Hospitals in Bombay. Medicines are checked in private laboratories. Justice Lentin has indicted the medical authorities for the supply of such fake medicines. I want to know from the Minister whether the allegations have been investigated and if so, whether the judgment of Justice Lentin in respect of the use of fake medicines in the JJ Group of Hospitals in Bombay has been taken into consideration,

SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY: Sir, so far as these allegations are concerned, they have been investigated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What he said before is, have you taken that into consideration while investigating the facts that he has given now? Did you take cognisance of those facts when you were investigating at that time?

SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY: We will take cognizance, I will certainly look into it if the hon. Member passes on the particulars of it.

SHRI ASHOK NATH VERMA: My second supplementary is this. Has the Medical Officer, Medical Stores Department, Bombay, been suspended on the basis of the allegations If not, why? Have the several reports of the audit been considered and what action has been taken if they have been considered?

SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY: Sir, I have already stated that the allegations that were levelled against him were found to be baseless. Therefore, no action could be taken. After some time, when this news appeared again and again in the press, the Officers concerned was transferred from Bombay to Madras.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: While finalising the list of medicines for purchase, what are the guidelines adopted by the Government to include drugs on rate-contract and is there any linient view to prefer drugs manufactured by local manufacturers to drugs manufactured by multinational companies?

SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY: We have several guidelines so far as purchases are concerned. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has adopted the centralised system of purchase of medicines and drugs and surgical items for the Medical Stores Department as well as for the National Health Programme. They have been implemented all over the country with the help of varigus State Governments. In this system of purchase, the powers of purchasing medicines of value up to Rs. 50,000/- are vested with the Deputy Assistant Director-General in charge of the Medical Stores Department through tender system. Medicines worth Rs. 50,000/- and above up to Rs. 1 lakh can be purchased by the Director-General, Health Services, directly from the market through tender system. All medicines and drugs and surgical items above Rs. 1 lakh have to be purchased by the Director-General of Supplies and Disposals through rate-contract or through indigenous purchases by adopting the tender system.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: How about encouraging the local manufacturers over the multi-nationals?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You cannot put a second cupplementary.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI: Sir, the Minister has replied that the purchase of drugs is made according to the advice of the expert committee and all that. The Expert Committee that

was appointed by Mr. Motilal Vohra which gave its report in November 1988 recommended more than 55 drugs, essential drugs, for the health programme. They have not been put under Category I and ... (*Interruption*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you putting your supplementary under question No. 181, or have you removed on to your question?

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI: I am asking this question under question No. 181. He says they are purchasing according to the Expert Committee recommendations. The Expert Committee was appointed in 1988; it submitted a report: it recommended 55 drugs. But purchases have never been made. They have never been brought under price control also. That is one thing. Secondly, 14 schemes have been given for the National Health Programme. Only 11 were referred. What happened to the other four? Why they were not taken into consideration ?

SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY: Sir, I will require notice. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 182.

Inclusion of drugs under price control

*182. CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK:†
DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in the *Economic Times* of the 9th March, 1990 captioned "Action to recover dues from drug firms soon";

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that a number of drugs having monopoly production and high market share of brands, which do not fulfil any of the five exclusion criteria as laid down by Kelkar Committee are still outside the price control;

(c) whether it is a fact that a number of representations have been received for inclusion of these drugs under price control;

(d) whether it is also a fact that none of these drugs fall under the ambit of expert groups; and

(e) by when his Ministry would examine these drugs to bring them under price control?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) Government have constituted a Standing Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals to consider all matters connected with the review of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1987 and the representations made on various Policy issues concerning DPCO, 1987, including exclusion inclusion of drugs in the scheduled categories.

The Standing Committee will be assisted by three Expert Groups, who are of advisory nature. The reports of these Expert Groups will be considered by the Standing Committee for making final recommendation. All such matters which do not fall within the ambit of the Expert Groups will be directly considered by the Standing Committee for a final recommendation.

CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK: Sir, a complete answer has not been given by the Minister. May I repeat my question ? The Government, in its press release issued on 8th March 1990, which appeared in the *"Economic Times"* on 9th March, 1990, said that all these... (*Interruption*).

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Chowdhary Ram Sewak.